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KAZAKHSTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Helping KazNTU Improve its Library

Through a USAID grant, the library of KazNTU opened a new reading hall of business and economics literature



Photo: EdNet

Opening ceremony at the library's new reading hall

"The USAID grant for textbooks was a very important support for our library. It enabled us to open a new reading hall and to offer our students and faculty new, quality materials on economics, business, and IT," says Director of the Library Donkusheva.

The Scientific Library of the Kazakh National Technical University (KazNTU) is one of the largest libraries in the Republic of Kazakhstan. As with many other Central Asian institutions of higher education, budget constraints restrict the University from purchasing an array of literature, limiting it to textbooks for specific programs.

In 2002, KazNTU applied to the USAID EdNet project for a library grant. With the grant, the University purchased more than 200 carefully selected books, which were used to create a new reading hall. Thematic orientation of the new reading hall makes it distinct. The hall boasts new editions of books on economics, business, and IT, all high demand subjects among students and faculty. "Appropriate information resources are key to the quality of education, and that needs a good, strong library," say assistants of the new reading hall. The USAID grant enabled KazNTU to break its budget barrier and enhance its library's ability to serve as a resource of quality information materials.

Within the last three years, the USAID EdNet project has issued 75 grants, totaling \$100,000, to higher education institutions of Central Asia. These grants were used to purchase textbooks and computer equipment. The EdNet project also aims to continue partnerships with grant-receiving universities, and provide further support in improving the quality of higher education. One such way is to encourage universities to participate in the Kazakhstani Research and Educational Network Association, KazRENA. Through the Association, higher education institutions will receive free, high-speed Internet access as well as various electronic services, such as distance learning, electronic testing, web hosting, email, videoconferences, and scientific information resources.